

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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CONTENTS OF NO. 2-3.

THE FOOL'S PRAYER.....	9
HALLOWED BE THY NAME.....	9
THE STILL HOUR.....	10
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.....	11
ANNUAL REPORT.....	12
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL:—	
A PLEA FOR THE COUNTRY CHILD (con-	
cluded).....	14
CHILDREN'S CLASSICS:—	
THE SEVEN SLEEPERS OF EPHESUS.....	15
THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.....	17
IMPORTANT NOTICES.....	18

THE FOOL'S PRAYER.

The royal feast was done; the King
Sought some new sport to banish care,
And to his jester cried: "Sir Fool,
Kneel now, and make for us a prayer!"

The jester doffed his cap and bells,
And stood the mocking court before;
They could not see the bitter smile
Behind the painted grin he wore.

He bowed his head and bent his knee
Upon the monarch's silken stool;
His pleading voice arose: "O Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!"

"No pity, Lord, could change the heart
From red with wrong to white as wool;
The rod must heal the sin; but, Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!"

"'Tis not by guilt the onward sweep
Of truth and right, O Lord, we stay;
'Tis by our follies that so long
We hold the earth from heaven away.

"These clumsy feet, still in the mire,
Go crushing blossoms without end;
These hard, well-meaning hands we thrust
Among the heartstrings of a friend.

"The ill-timed truth we might have kept,—
Who knows how sharp it pierced and
stung?

The word we had not sense to say,—
Who knows how grandly it had rung?

"Our faults no tenderness should ask,
The chastening stripes must cleanse
them all;
But for our blunders,—Oh, in shame
Before the eyes of Heaven we fall.

"Earth bears no balsam for mistakes;
Men crown the knave and scourge the
tool
That did his will; but Thou, O Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!"

The room was hushed; in silence rose
The King, and sought his gardens cool,
And walked apart, and murmured low,
"Be merciful to me, a fool!"

—*Edward Rowland Sill.*

HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

Names have a deeper connection with
things than we sometimes think. When
they have to do with persons, we instinctively
preserve them as in some sort
sacred. A man cannot change his name
at will, to suit his pleasure. He who
forges the name of another is a criminal
in the eye of the law. The name is a
part of the very self.

The name of our Lord Jesus Christ
stands for the power of his religion, the
vital, spiritual force which renders the
truths of religion operative upon the
human heart, the saving power of the
gospel. You cannot separate these in
your thought from him in whom the
principles of Christianity were inseparably
bound up. And the supreme Name
of all, the awful name of God, expresses
the soul's idea of infinite power and wisdom
and love,—all those attributes which
inhere in our thought of the Ruler of the
universe, all wise, all-powerful, all-holy,
all-good.

We can see, then, why it is that our
Saviour, in teaching his disciples to pray,
should make them ask, as their very first
request, something connected with this
Name,—that is to say, with this supreme
thought of God. There are other things
which are good for us, necessary for us,
which, on our usual theory of what prayer

is, we should begin by asking for. What can we ask for more urgently than the bread without which we should starve; the food we must have to keep us in the life of this body; the bread of the mind, whose sweet and wholesome thoughts we must have to nourish us; the bread of the heart to sustain and comfort us with the solace of dear companionship; the bread of the soul, to be ennobled with high, devout thoughts, and to feel that we are growing purer, better?

This on one side of our need;...and then, yet deeper, more intense, the cry of the spirit, in its bitter sense of shortcoming and sinfulness, for pardon and reconciliation. Sooner than the very food without which we die, give me (this is the prayer of the soul), give me some promise that I shall be lifted out of this slough of despond at my own weakness and wanderings; lift a light upon me which shall show me the way I can walk in, and roll off from me the burdens which hinder me therein.

Give me and Forgive me: these two petitions are the natural asking of the soul when it passes out from the chambers of self-content and seeks to enter the presence of the All-Giver by the portal of prayer.

And Christ recognizes that these needs are true, that their cry is right and fit. Only He says: "Not yet! Not yet! You must begin on a higher plane if you would save your need from degenerating into a self-absorbed and self-seeking cry." (We can be selfish even in our prayers.) How many of us have even besought forgiveness of our Maker, not so much from love for Him and desire to be in accord with His perfect law of righteousness, as from a sense of personal discomfort and a desire to have that removed!

The Master bids,—think first of that which is infinitely *above yourself*. Fill your soul with the great thought of God. If you lift your soul to it, you will lift your soul's desires also to a point where they will be purged from selfishness. The first thing to ask for in this petition is that reverence may be ripened in ourselves,—that we may have a hallowing sense of what that Name really means. And the heart of our desire should be nothing less than that His Name may utter itself through us. There is an eternal truth in that mysterious narra-

tive in the book of Genesis which describes Jacob wrestling with the unseen Power until the breaking of the day. The personal struggle for a noble, living conception of God wins a blessing forevermore. For we must not forget that what a man thinks, feels, and believes about God is the deepest thought and faith in him. It would be easy to show that everything we have to-day which is of real worth in our modern life comes from men who have had a great, vital conception of God. And certainly, even though our own highest thought of Him can but dimly state His perfectness, it will make an immense difference to us in the way we live, in what we do, whether we think of God as highly and holily as we can, or whether we fall short of that; whether we hallow His Name.

So too, with the other side of our petition,—with the question what we can do to help make His Name hallowed in the world. What without Him we cannot do at all, with Him we can do much to aid. The prayer that His name be hallowed really asks that the time may come when all men shall know Him and love Him. He answers such a prayer partly through His faithful children doing something to make Him more real in power and blessing to the trust and loyalty of other men. When that prayer is perfectly fulfilled, it must be because every one of us (not in our own strength, but in God's strength) has done something to persuade our brethren that this world is God's world and that they are His children.

—Henry Wilder Foote.

THE STILL HOUR.

A saint is not a person who does a great many religious things, but a person who does everything religiously. Your work,—your ordinary, common, matter-of-fact, humdrum daily work,—are you inclined to think that all this is not religious at all? But you can make it religious! You are tempted to confine your religion to church services. Instead of that, carry your religion also into your work; raise your work to the level of your religion; make them both equally holy.

In every kind of work that man or woman can do there is an element of drudgery. Sometimes there seems to be nothing but drudgery, nothing but mechanical routine

that eats the heart out of life. There is only one cure for that: Do your mechanical routine for God, and not merely for your daily bread. Fill it with prayer. Let the perfection of your diligence, accuracy, punctuality, conscientiousness, become a continuous divine service; then your drudgery will be radiant with the beauty of holiness.—A. H. McNeile.

There are briars besetting every path
That call for constant care;
There is a cross in every lot
And an earnest need for prayer;
But a lowly heart that leans on God
Is happy anywhere.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass., Tel. Quincy 1140.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Rev. Alan Pressley Wilson, formerly of Blossburg, Penn., is now at Marietta, Lancaster County, Penn.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

It will greatly aid those who are sending books, magazines, cards, and so forth, if all our correspondents who send requests for their children will take pains to mention their names and ages. Lacking such information, one is likely to make mistakes; for a boy of twelve and a girl of seven are not usually interested in the same things or benefited by the same things.

REQUESTS.

1. I should be pleased if some Cheerful Letter ladies would send me the *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Literary Digest*, beginning with January, 1921. Any magazine or book will be appreciated. Mrs. J. D. Coates, Hughes River, Virginia.

2. Samuel B. Smith, Stoneville, North Carolina, will be glad of novels.

3. I am so very grateful for the many kind responses to my request for reading matter that I would be glad to have you express my appreciation in *The Cheerful Letter*. I have received several books of

poetry, packages of magazines, the *Christian Register*, letters, tracts, leaflets, clippings,—all interesting and helpful, and much of it I have been able to pass along to others. If any one has a book of the so-called "inspiration" type, such as the works of Orison S. Marden, to give, I would be glad of it, not only for my own use, but for the help and encouragement of others. I can use works intended to help nervous people to regain self-control, such as "Pep," "Peg Along," "Those Nerves," or anything similar. I pass along the help I thus receive. Already it has been of inestimable value to me, and life has been brighter, more helpful because of those who have sent me reading matter. Mrs. E. M. Bailey, Tewksbury, Mass.

4. Mrs. Roy Payne, Lemoyne, Nebraska, sends warm thanks for reading sent her. She has lost the addresses of senders and takes this way of reaching friends who remembered her. She will be grateful for any more reading.

5. Effie Pendleton, Elamsville, Virginia, asks for bits of ribbon.

6. Miss Bessie Price, Boomer, North Carolina, ask for picture-books and cards; also scrap pieces. Address Route 2, Box 37.

7. Mrs. Bessie Hartsog, Applegate, North Carolina, will be glad of good reading for herself and husband, and pictures for the little boys.

8. Mrs. Alvin Hartsog, Clifton, North Carolina, a great invalid, will be glad of light reading.

9. Mrs. Lula Nelson, Knoxville, Tennessee, Route 5, asks for patchwork pieces.

10. Miss Hene Tuggle, Elamsville, Virginia, will be glad of books or magazines, which she will pass on after reading.

11. Mrs. A. J. Parkhill, Gainesville, Texas, Route 2, will be glad of scraps and reading.

12. A kind friend of mine gave me two copies of *The Cheerful Letter*, which I read and enjoyed very much. After I had read them I thought that I would write and ask for good reading matter, such as books and magazines. I am fifteen years old, and will be glad of any kind of reading that will suit my age. My little

sister, Hazel, aged ten, will be very glad of books and cards. Miss Ree Brown, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, Route 2.

13. I am a girl of fourteen years and am the only child that lives with my mother and father. All the rest are married and I get very lonesome here. I should like to have some pieces for patchwork; also magazines and post-cards would be much appreciated. I would like to correspond with some of you Cheerful Letter friends. Miss Gay Foley, Elamsville, Virginia, Route 1, Box 44.

14. As a subscriber to *The Cheerful Letter* I politely ask you to insert in the column of requests the following: Mark Twain's "Innocents Abroad" and Andersen's "Fairy Tales." Felix Padilla, P.O. Box No. 38, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands of the United States.

15. Oakley Rivers of Vanderbilt, Michigan, a boy of fourteen years, in the seventh grade of school work, with a fine mind, will appreciate good books, and will especially enjoy the *American Boy*.

16. I am an old man of seventy-six years; live alone; cannot do very much, but love to read. If you could send me some good books, they would help to pass many lonely hours. I would appreciate any good fiction or Civil War stories, as I am an old soldier. I hope you will remember me. W. G. Jones, Lansing, North Carolina.

17. I wish to thank all my Cheerful Letter friends who have sent me reading matter in the past. I hope they will continue to remember me with magazines, cards, and pictures. I pass some of them on to my friends. Miss Verna Thornton, Peru, Amherst County, Virginia.

18. I live in a lonely place in the country, among the hills, five miles from the nearest town. We have no family, just my husband and myself, and I often get lonely when he is away at work, and would appreciate any good books and papers. We are poor people who can't buy books and papers, but we do enjoy reading. We are not stout, either of us, and I would love to become a member of the Cheerful Letter Club. After some kind friend has read it, I would be very grateful for *The Cheerful Letter*. I would

like to correspond with some of the members of the Club. Mrs. A. M. Taylor, Amherst, Virginia, Route 2, Box 73.

19. Mrs. J. P. Puett, Lenoir, North Carolina, an elderly lady, will be grateful for *Ladies' Home Journal* or good stories.

20. Here I come asking for any cheer. My husband and I are both getting old and not able to work. Most all of our children are married and gone from home. We don't have any help and get so lonely. I would appreciate any good reading and some pieces for my quilt. We have taken a little girl from the poorhouse to raise. She is thirteen years old. I shall be glad of anything suitable for her. For reference write Rev. Joe Bowman, Calloway, Virginia. Mrs. Ellen Brubaker, Calloway, Virginia.

21. Mrs. Anna M. Hausberry, Orting, Washington, Box 46, sends an interesting account of her efforts to extend the work of *The Cheerful Letter* by writing to sick, lonely, and shut-in persons, although she herself is advanced in years and far from well. One of her correspondents (in North Carolina) has been in bed more than forty years. She adds: "I make the best of every minute of the good old summer time. I raise all the flowers I can, I do love them so much." She would like to receive the *Christian Herald*, and entertaining books.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER ANNUAL REPORT 1920-21.

The Cheerful Letter work still holds its fascination and pleasure for the members engaged in it. While there are no exciting records for the season of 1920-21, the reports from the committees far and wide show an astonishing amount of efficient and loving work done all over the country.

The eight monthly conferences have acted as a spur and an incentive to carry on and put forth greater efforts. The attendance has steadily increased, showing an average of 48. Mrs. Nichols has presided at every meeting with one exception, when illness prevented. New life and enthusiasm have been carried by her presence and her helpful message to no

less than thirty branches in three States. With chairmen and members receptive and ready to respond to the many appeals, a fine spirit of loyalty and co-operation has been noticeable. We have been honored from time to time by visits from the president, the secretary, and several directors of the Alliance. Their cordial greetings and words of commendation for our work have been greatly appreciated.

At the October meeting Miss Taylor's illuminating account of her two days' visit to a correspondent in Virginia opened our eyes to the conditions existing in many Southern homes. Much better can we understand what our friendship and help must mean. The next month, Miss Annie F. Brown, superintendent of the Lend a Hand Society, awakened our interest in Rev. Alexander McDonald's work along the Maine coast. His life is devoted to the welfare of the fishermen and their families. Later, Miss Ida C. Clothier described her unique work in caring for those who have given up everything to seek the air of Colorado with dear ones suffering from tubercular trouble. Reading matter has been the medium of helpfulness in each instance.

The sending of monthly reports to the chairmen of distant branches has been continued during the year. Only by reading the grateful acknowledgments can we begin to realize the satisfaction and inestimable value this closer touch with headquarters brings. To be made to feel that one is a part of an organization which is a power for good is a source of pride and a stimulus to ever greater endeavors.

The exchange is indebted to the chairmen of the various departments for their helpfulness.

Mrs. Hallett has sent twelve Bibles and seven Testaments. Most welcome was a gift of \$5 from San Francisco. Twelve Bibles and Testaments have also been sent by Cheerful Letter branches.

The Home Study Department this year is under a new chairman, Mrs. Saville, whose report follows:—

"As very little if any work was done during the period of the World War, a fresh start had to be made. We have been, however, pleased with requests for assistance in numerous lines of study which have come to us from the South and West, from the West Indies, and from

Trinidad. Those who have volunteered as teachers have had good results and report much improvement in their students. We have sent away many books to those wishing to broaden their education along certain lines, and many to help young mothers with the young children who are too far from schools to attend regularly. To sum it all up, we feel we have not worked in vain, but have made a good beginning and hope for more widespread results another year."

The Cheerful Letter Exchange was fortunate in securing Mrs. Stevens to take charge of the libraries. Her annual report shows excellent work in transferring libraries, sending out new ones, renewing old ones, and making five travelling libraries permanent. There are one hundred and four libraries now listed—an increase of eight over last season. Sharing our books has brought us in touch with thirty-seven States, the Philippines, and the Virgin Islands. Twelve hundred books have been added to the circulation this year.

A new call for literature comes from Mr. Hugh McLeod living in Langley, Washington, a part of the country at present undeveloped. There are lumber camps, small saw-mills, and a large floating population (including many from our State) who would thoroughly appreciate good reading matter—which he will gladly distribute.

Very widespread and generous has been the interest and co-operation shown by the Cheerful Letter chairmen and the members of the branches in the success of the Sunshine Bags. Not only from Boston and all through this State, but from New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and California we have received contributions,—spontaneous gifts, when we consider only one appeal was ever sent out by the committee. On April 30, 1921, Miss Jones, our efficient treasurer, drew from the bank to pay the bill which would square our accounts for the printing of the little paper \$127.28—leaving a balance on hand of \$350. This bill was less than expected, partly because the paper has been reduced two pages for the present.

Worthy of mention is the fact that the accrued interest, or, as it is aptly styled, "our Invisible Bag," has netted \$15.

Mrs. Brush, All Souls Church, New York, spurred on by a determination to go

"over the top," has collected \$37.84, thus making hers the banner branch.

For another year the individual work of Mrs. Sands has won our admiration. As her scrapbooks are always in demand, and as much material is furnished by friends, the making of these books forms the principal part of her work. She has just completed her *three hundredth*. Two-thirds of these were made this season under her direction and personally sent away. Two hundred and fifty post cards are needed each month to supply the names on her mailing-list. Her large correspondence is a constant delight. She has answered all sorts of questions, on subjects ranging from babies and ivy poisoning to astronomy. Many times a trip to the library has been necessary before replying. In addition to all this writing, as a volunteer worker in the Home Study Department she has taught English to a young girl in Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, with excellent results.

Mrs. Sands's enthusiasm has attracted people not otherwise engaged in church work to lend a hand, so she feels it has been to her "a wonderful year."

A study of the last Manual reveals the fact that more than half the Alliances have no Cheerful Letter chairmen. Therefore in April a committee was chosen to send the pamphlet of the monthly report of the Cheerful Letter and a circular letter to many presidents. It was hoped by this means to awaken an interest in starting new branches.

The number of books, magazines, cards, patchwork pieces, and miscellaneous articles sent away in 1920-21 is far in excess of last year. This is easily understood after citing a few instances of work accomplished. The chairman of the Brookline First Parish heads her list with 570 books and 2,033 magazines, which were forwarded in freight-boxes to institutions and distributing agents and by mail to fifty-five persons in fourteen States. The Needham branch reports the sending of 5,099 articles, not including the books in three libraries collected, packed, and sent away by one energetic member, who holds herself responsible for them. Providence, R.I., First Congregational Alliance has a total of 4,888 items.

To the Cambridge First Branch is credited the largest number of regular correspondents—sixty-nine. Also a new

feature is the Cheerful Letter work being done by a group of Boy Scouts and by a Lend a Hand Club. The Scouts have taken in charge twenty-five boys—eight are Indians, twelve live in lighthouses, four in the South, and, to make the geographical location complete, one in Alaska. Books are sent regularly, and an enthusiastic correspondence is carried on. It is Scout activity and recorded as such. The Lend a Hand Club is collecting a library for children in Stoneville, North Carolina. The books are distributed by a boy in the town under the supervision of an older person. A helpful suggestion for other chairmen—the remembering of shut-ins—comes from this same branch. There are at present sixteen devoted members unable to attend the meetings, but with interest always keen. To some a written report is sent. To others, food from the lunch or tea is taken by a neighbor, who gives an oral report.

Christmas work was done individually. Besides remembering correspondents, many branches were generous in forwarding boxes and packages to distributing centres.

Although it is impossible to state the benefit our correspondents all over the country have received from letters and gifts, there are hundreds of lives that have been brightened by our kindly interest. These people are now warm personal friends, and we in turn have broadened our lives by this friendship.

During the year several faithful and devoted workers have entered into the larger life beyond. Others on account of bodily infirmities are prevented from continuing a work dear to their hearts. We would remember them with affection at this time. Realizing that the richest legacy one can leave to the world is a life of loving service, may we all with renewed consecration strive to enrich our own lives by helping others to live!

Mrs. FRANCIS HASTINGS, *Secretary*.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

A PLEA FOR THE COUNTRY CHILD.

(Concluded from the June number.)

In one county, a public health nurse makes the rounds of the schools and examines the children periodically. It is not, however, the children of school age who need an advocate. After all, school

boys and girls in the country are, perforce, in the open a great deal of the time. They get plenty of exercise; they have rich milk and pure water to drink; their meals are at fairly regular hours. It is the babies and children under five who are kept in the house all the winter long, who sleep in airless rooms, eat whenever they think they are hungry, and then eat the sort of food which must slowly ruin their poor little stomachs—these are the ones who need a friend to speak for them.

Naturally, as it's the only standard they have to go by, each one of them brings up his or her children according to her mother's methods. In other words, the children live the same sort of life their parents lead. They are also included in the pleasures of their elders. On Saturday nights, for example, they are taken to town, where for hours the men will stand on the corners talking, and the women wander in and out of the stores, lugging a baby usually, with three or four older children following wearily. The baby is not left out of the treat of popcorn, peanuts, and candy.

Not long ago my husband and I attended an evening gathering at a neighboring home in the country. As soon as we stepped into the house, several women rushed up to me and said: "But where are your babies? We were so anxious to see them." Of course I said they were where they always were at that time of night, at home in their little beds. As soon as I had said it, I looked around the room and realized that mine were the only children who were in their beds. In that close, stuffy house, heated by a big base-burner, and lit with several smoky oil-lamps, a number of children were running about. One baby was being undressed in the kitchen, surrounded by chattering women. He passed through at least three pairs of hands in about five minutes. Of course he was screaming. But there was an easy remedy for that. Food soon quieted him. These women will not believe that it is possible to nurse a child too often. Most of them have their babies sleep with them, letting them nurse at will through the night.

One elderly woman said to me: "I understand that you have regular hours for your children to eat and sleep and that you are very strict about keeping to these hours. That's all very well when a person has time to fool with such things,

but when I raised my family, I was too busy a woman. When they were hungry, I fed them. They sat at the table with us and ate whatever we did, from the time they were a few months old. And they didn't go to bed until their father and I were ready to go." She said it with a sort of pride. I glanced around at her grown sons and daughters—thin, nervous, sallow-complexioned, old looking for their ages—and I wondered why she spoke proudly!

Of course, there is an enlightened class in the country as well as in town. This part of the State boasts of some of the finest farms in the State, and many educated and cultured people.

Last fall at the county fair, which is the great event of the year, the Red Cross tent, where the county nurse weighed and measured children, was crowded all day long for the four days of the fair. A blue ribbon was given each day to the child who came nearest its correct weight and height, according to age. Although a prize is naturally fascinating to women, I think that most of the mothers who brought their children were actuated rather by the desire to know how nearly their babies attained to a satisfactory condition of health, and to learn how to remedy any defects found.

A child-welfare station would arouse this same kind of interest. I believe that the saving of babies is one of the greatest works in the world.—*Mother and Child.*

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

THE SEVEN SLEEPERS OF EPHEBUS.

Once upon a time, in days long ago, after Saint Paul and the other Apostles had lived and died, there were in the Asiatic city of Ephesus many people who had heard the Gospel story of the Lord Jesus Christ and were trying to be faithful followers of his teachings. It was not an easy matter then to be a Christian, for very few of the powerful rulers of the land had any liking for the new faith; they considered that it was a foolish set of notions that meant disloyalty to the existing government. When the emperor Decius came into power he made up his mind to clear out the new faith as if it were a kind of weeds to be uprooted. He made a law that all the people of Ephe-

sus (and other cities, too) must give up all Christian belief, go to worship in the pagan temples, and make offerings to heathen images.

Many of the Ephesus people were afraid to disobey the law and so they went through the form of praying to Jupiter and giving money or young lambs or baskets of barley to Ceres. But there were seven young men who declared to each other that it would be shameful to go through the motions of worshipping idols when they knew perfectly well that the one true God was Maker and Father and Friend of men. So the seven friends refused to obey the emperor and were arrested and taken before the court. The judge, when he saw the seven, observed what intelligent, fine youths they were, and he felt it would be wise to give them a little time to think the matter over. They knew well enough that they would never yield their principles and desert the cause of their captain, the Christ; but they were glad to have a chance to talk together and pray together before the executioner cut off their heads. They managed that night to get away by themselves and to hide in a cave in the mountain-side beyond the city walls. There they recalled together all the splendid, encouraging things that Paul and the other Apostles had said about the manliness of keeping true to the Faith, and they agreed that not one should desert the cause. Then, after a long day of excitement and suspense, they fell asleep from sheer weariness.

They were to present themselves again before the court the next day, but not one of them was seen. The officers of the emperor were furious over their disappearance, searching parties were sent out to arrest them again, but not one could ever be found. And that year passed, and another year, and another. The officers of the court became old and died. The friends and relatives and neighbors of the seven young men all died. So did the sons and grandsons of the Ephesus people who knew about the strange disappearance of the seven. And then, after many years more, the people who lived in Ephesus had lost all knowledge that such a thing ever happened at all.

It was almost four hundred years after the time of the emperor Decius that a shepherd who pastured his flock out on the mountain-side near Ephesus wished to

build a stone wall around a sheltered bit of ground, for a sheepfold. There were a good many stones in one place, at the foot of a cliff, where the jar of an earthquake might have sometime rolled them down from the upper slopes. These the shepherd thought would answer his purpose very well, so he carried off a good many of them, and as he did so he noticed that there was some sort of hollow space in the mountain-side behind them. But he was too much interested in his sheep to pay much attention to a hole in the ground.

The hole was in fact an opening leading to the cave in which the seven friends had gone to sleep hundreds of years before.

When the light of a new day shone in, the sleepers woke; but of course they had no idea of the time that had passed since they fell asleep, exhausted by the excitement and horror of their trial. One of their number proposed to go out and buy some food, to put them in better condition to meet the events of a new day, and they gave him all the coins they had,—not many, for Christians of their time considered every needy neighbor as a brother, and spent generously whatever they had for the common good.

Malchus (that was the name of the youth who undertook the errand) was puzzled when he reached the city gate; it did not look as it had before; the shape was different, and the sacred symbol of the Christian faith—the Cross—was carved at the top. That seemed almost unbelievable, for the Christians in Ephesus had never been allowed, since he could remember, to show or use that symbol of their faith in any public place. As he went along the street he saw only strange faces. He could hardly understand the speech of passers-by, for their words and their pronunciation were different from what he was used to hearing. He found a baker's shop—a strange shop kept by a strange man—and asked for bread. The shopkeeper looked curiously at the coin offered in payment and hurried to show it to a neighbor, then asked where he had found it. Malchus could not understand what they meant. He knew nothing of the passing of nearly four hundred years, and it did not occur to him that his common copper coin looked strange to the baker. The shopkeeper did in fact think

the odd-looking customer must have discovered some hidden horde of ancient money and jewels; for in that land it had many times happened that people buried precious things in the ground to save them from enemies in wartime, and the valuables were found by other people long, long years later.* The baker wanted to share in any such discovery, so he demanded that Malchus should tell where the money came from. Malchus could not quite understand his questions, but he thought he was being asked to betray where his friends were, and he refused to answer. Then the baker and a crowd of neighbors dragged him before the governor of the city. Malchus supposed he was to be condemned for his religion, but, to his amazement, he found that the governor and almost all the men about him were evidently Christians like himself. They asked who he was and where he came from. He told the names and homes of his parents and his friends, but they were more puzzled than ever, for at that time there was no such street as he named, and there were no such people living in the city. At last an old lawyer who had studied the history of the country realized that Malchus was talking of people and things that used to be in Ephesus centuries ago!

"I do not understand what it all means," said Malchus, "but, before the God we all believe in, I tell you the simple truth. Come with me and I will take you to my six friends who still wait in the cave, awakened after our long sleep."

So the governor and the bishop and the learned lawyer and a great troop of eager, curious people went out through the gate with the Cross carved upon it, and they found the other six young men and heard their story. Likewise the young men now heard with joy and thankfulness that the times of persecution were long past, and that the ruling emperor, Theodosius, was himself a Christian. All men were now free to follow Jesus as Lord and Master.

Then Malchus said to the men of the new era: "You behold us here as men risen from the dead. Truly it shall be like this for all men in the next life, if they faithfully follow our Lord. For all the faithful shall awake there from death as from a sleep."

* Matt. xlii, 44.

Then the seven friends bowed their heads and fell asleep once more, not to waken again in this world, but only in the world to come.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 1925 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge 40, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

A BIRD HUNT.

(Continued from June number.)

11. I've travelled far, as you may know, to a land to which you hope to go.

12. Though in a foreign land I fly, hurrah! American am I.

13. 'Tis seldom I a party grace, for I belong in a fireplace.

14. Uriah Heep I'd hate to be; there's nothing humble about me.

15. To guess my name you'll have to think; my family is quite extinct.

16. Some men I help to gather wealth, to others I bring food for health.

17. Some call me silly, more's the pity; my bright remarks once saved a city.

18. Some college boys I oft made glad, but bring distress to many a dad.

19. Two babies lost, well known to fame; I covered them—now guess my name.

20. Though poets don't put me in metre, you've heard how I once jeered at Peter.

Answer to the puzzle in the May number.

1. Stork. 2. Ostrich. 3. Chicken. 4. Swallow. 5. Dove. 6. English Sparrow. 7. Canary. 8. Parrot. 9. Raven. 10. Turkey.

The salesman in a fur shop was displaying a collar and muff to a prospective purchaser. "This is the imitation fitch, madam," he said. "It is quite satisfactory, only I must warn you that it will not stand getting wet." "Dear me!" responded the lady. "What do the little imitation fitches do when it rains?"

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

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OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or similar article is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of *The Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

To fill the unusual demand for copies of *The Cheerful Letter*, it will be greatly appreciated by the Committee if friends will do personal canvassing during the year and bring in a list of new subscriptions. Many of our correspondents feel that they can no longer afford to subscribe but deplore the loss of the paper.

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MUSIC.

The music sent out by this department has in the past given much pleasure; and now that there is more and more interest in "community singing" the calls for help may naturally be expected to be greater.

Offers and requests should be sent to Mrs. Thomas Lacey, 35 East 30th Street, New York City, or to All Souls Church, Fourth Avenue and 20th Street, New York City.